Raping the rape victim

Media should not rape the rape victim again.

In today’s world of information, information is a powerful weapon that can empower or either destroys almost anything. Considering the news in a right and proper manner is essential and is a must to safeguard the journalists’ ethics and norms under which the right to freedom of press is exercised.

Rape is one of the most heinous crimes against women. Protecting the identity of a rape victim is fundamental and first priority when reporting a rape case. There are instances where the rape victim wants to go on record but let’s keep those aside and focus on the minors (girls). Protecting identity of a minor who is a rape victim is fundamental and absolute duty of every reporters and news organisation. Even a slight hint that could lead to identifying the victim should be avoided at all cost. Utmost care must be taken when publishing such incidents.

Media should not rape the rape victim again by disclosing her identity as well as providing vital information which could lead her identity known to everyone.

Protecting the identity means protecting the identity.

Mentioning name of the locality, school the rape victim (minor) attends or mentioning her class in news/dailies is shocking and unfortunate. And it is a clear violation of the one fundamental rule which is ‘prove it in a worthy way’. The name is mention and slight, but giving away information vital to identifying the victim is same as mentioning the name.

Identifying a victim of a rape victim is an offence punishable with up to 2 years imprisonment, with or without fine.

Under section 217 of the Indian Law of Justice Act (Care and Protection of Children), 2000, publishing, disclosing name, address, school or any other particulars, photographs, etc., which can identify the child, is prohibited.

Under the press law guide of The Press Council of India Journalistic Conduct Norms- No names are to be published or disclosed, no photographs to be used, no particulars leading to identifying the victim be published.

Newspapers and other media in Manipur should examine, educate its staffs and equipped themselves with the information and rules with respect to reporting and publishing such crimes against children and women. Let’s not rape the victim again and again.

Protecting identity of minor whether he/she is a victim or the culprit is a must for greater good in their future.

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